

Oak Succession Planning

OAK Leadership Development Program

In October 1998, the Oakland Operations Office (OAK) introduced a pilot succession planning program aimed at developing future leaders of OAK. The OAK Leadership Development Program (LDP) gives GS-12 through GS-14 employees the opportunity to apply for this 24-month program, which consists of classroom work, shadowing assignments, a rotational work assignment, participation in the Intergovernmental Management Training Program (IGMT) and completion of a special project that will benefit DOE OAK. Selected employees remain in their current positions during this program and there is no promotion guarantee implied by completion of this program.

Four (4) participants were selected for the pilot program. OAK plans to select a minimum of two (2) additional employees each year to begin participation in the program.

The following information provides information for offices who may be interested in implementing a similar program. Additional information can be obtained from Mort Lankasky, (510) 637-1848 or mort.lankasky@oak.doe.gov.

Development Opportunity Announcement

The LDP announcement was posted for one month. Minimum eligibility requirements were:

- Grades GS-12 through GS-14
- Federal Service employment for at least 3 years, two of which must be with DOE;
- No participation in another employment development program within the last 3 years;
- Current "pass" or equivalent performance rating of record.

Applicants addressed four equally weighted factors:

- (1) Describe your ability to apply leadership skills such as leading, coaching, mentoring, etc. at work or through volunteer activities.
- (2) Describe your ability to communicate orally, including your ability to meet and deal with people in order to provide and exchange information.
- (3) Describe your skill in written communication with officials and staff at different organizational levels about complex and/or sensitive issues.
- (4) Describe your ability to analyze and identify problems, develop solutions and make recommendations.

Selection Committee

The Selection Committee consisted of six (6) GS-15 managers and a Human Resources representative. In addition to rating the four factors addressed by the applicants, the committee considered other fairness and success factors:

- Future managerial potential
- Benefit to the organization
- Equity in distribution within OAK

- Diversity
- Grade level equity

Program Requirements

- Classroom work consists of core curriculum of two (2) courses: Basic Supervision and Personnel Management for Supervisors, and three (3) electives. Essential management/leadership competencies are addressed through these courses.
- Participants complete two (2) shadowing assignments, each one-week long, in a functional area other than their own. Shadowing assignments provide experiences with the day-to-day work of a manager.
- Participants complete one (1) Rotational Work Assignment of 30 days in a functional area other than their own. The rotational assignment is designed to provide exposure to another functional area within OAK.
- Participants complete a Special Project that will benefit OAK.
- Participants attend the Intergovernmental Management Training Program to meet with professionals from other federal, state and local governmental units in the local area in order to share ideas and to network.
- Self-evaluation reports are submitted to the Steering Committee once a quarter detailing progress-to-date and any issues that have occurred.

Steering Committee

The members of the Selection Committee now comprise the Steering Committee. Upon the selection of the participants, the Steering Committee met with them and their supervisors to clarify the expectations of the program. The participants were required to develop schedules to address how they planned to meet the program requirements. Their schedules were discussed with and approved by the committee. The participants submit self-evaluations to the Committee once a quarter. The Committee meets with them to discuss their progress and any issues that have occurred. The rotation assignments, shadowing assignments and special projects must be approved by the Steering Committee.

Other Attributes of the LDP

The LDP requires that the participants be self-directed and meet the program requirements within available resources:

- The only centralized funding committed to the program is funding for the training curriculum. All other expenses, including travel and per diem expenses for the rotation assignments, must be paid for by the employee's organization. If limited funding is available, the participant must arrange to meet all requirements in the local area;
- The participants make arrangements for their own rotation assignments, shadow assignments and special projects;
- Because participants must maintain their current positions in addition to meeting the requirements of the LDP, the program is flexible and allows for creativity.